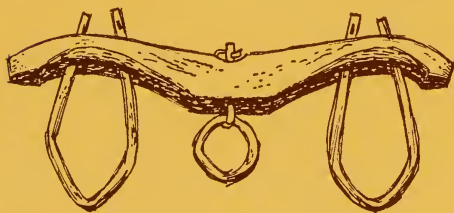


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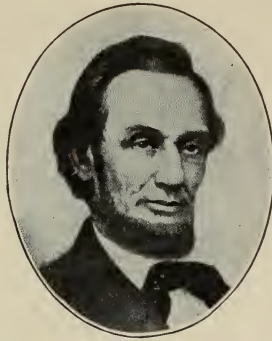
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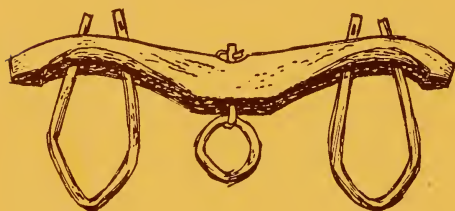
*founded by*  
HARLAN HOYT HORNER  
*and*  
HENRIETTA CALHOUN HORNER

# Abraham Lincoln



Address Delivered Before  
TOPEKA HI-TWELVE CLUB  
on  
Wednesday, February, 9th, 1927  
By  
ROBERT STONE  
Topeka, Kansas

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MEMORIAL  
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LINCOLN'S life was only four short years—all the rest was preparation for those four years of incomparable service to the world and humanity, which no other man of that generation had the wisdom, the patience or the fortitude to render. The constitution of the United States was the compass by which he steered the ship of state, and free government by the people governed was the goal of his course. No other statesman of his day used that compass implicitly or sought that goal with unfaltering faith. No other program would have saved our flag or made a government of the people, and by the people imperishable upon the earth.

For this great task, his meager preparation was this:

A term or so in a poor rural school—his only schooling;  
Two trips to New Orleans and a winter in Washington—  
his only contact with the outside world;

A petty clerkship and then a partnership in a crossroad  
grocery store, which ended in bankruptcy—his only business  
experience;

A country law practice following the circuits about the  
straggling Illinois county seats—his only legal training;  
Several losing campaigns for public office, four terms in  
the Illinois Legislature, and one disappointing session in  
Congress—his only experience in statescraft or politics.

How could such a course fit a man to serve a nation in its hour of need? It would seem that there must have been some innate qualities or some intimate influence of the home.

The home life was poor indeed. As a child he knew all the hardships of pioneer life. You and I—some of us—have seen the great ox teams patiently pulling their trains of prairie schooners along the Oregon and Santa Fe Trails in Kansas. But in no such romantic and royal manner did his parents move from the fastnesses of the Kentucky forests to the unwelcome fields of Indiana and Illinois. In the days of drouth and the grasshoppers, we have seen the pioneer Kansan wending his weary way back to his wife's folks in a ramshackle Conestoga wagon filled with old furniture, a sad-faced wife and dirty faced children, hauled by a scrub team, with a sore-footed hound, trailing under the rear axle, but he never presented a more forlorn appearance than Thomas Lincoln and his outfit moving from one hopeless failure to start another in a newer and more desolate place. Our parents came here in the early 50's to help make Kansas a free state. They lived in log cabins, sod houses and dugouts. Sometimes the feet of the children were frozen in the cabins. But Thomas Lincoln passed the first winter in Indiana in what was called an open camp. It was a shanty with the bank of a hill for one side, with a poor roof, two ends walled up, with the side opposite the hill left open to the elements. The only fire was built on the open side. It is little wonder that the mother—the beautiful, high-strung Nancy Hanks, did not



long survive. The home life was not calculated to give him culture or inspire him with ambition. There were little schooling, few books and little social life. Yet somehow the boy grew and developed. He worked in the fields, in stores and on the river. He became the best wrestler and story teller in the community. He got hold of a few classic books and made them his own. He fell in with a surveyor and learned a little mathematics. He found a copy of Blackstone and became a county lawyer. He ran for the Illinois Legislature and became a local politician and acquired an interest in the politics and history of his country.

There must have been some unknown strain of blood, through Nancy Hanks or through his father from his Pilgrim ancestors who crossed the stormy sea to establish freedom of religion in America. So that somehow, when the crisis came, by some strange alchemy, this seeming dross became pure gold; this unschooled country lawyer, with his pitiless logic, confounded Douglas, the brilliant debater, and national leader of Democracy; this man from the bookless villages, spoke in simple classic English—this unknown man became the chief spokesman of a great new party, defining the issue as no one else had dared to do. He became a voice in the wilderness, crying,

“A house divided against itself cannot stand, I believe this Government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved; I do not expect the house to fall; but I do expect that it will cease to be divided.”

The times were agog, parties were falling in pieces, Northern sentiment was hopelessly divided, and agitation and uncertainty were in the very air. Webster had said only a few years before,

“I wish to speak today, not as a Massachusetts man, nor as a northern man, but as an American, and a member of the Senate of the United States.”

“It is not to be denied that we live in the midst of strong agitations and are surrounded by very considerable dangers to our institutions and government. The imprisoned winds are let loose. The East, the North, and the stormy South combine to throw the whole sea into commotion, to toss its billows to the skies, and disclose its profoundest depths.”

“I am looking out for no fragment upon which to float away from the wreck, if wreck there must be, but for the good of the whole, and the preservation of all; and there is that which will keep me to my duty during this struggle, whether the sun and the stars shall appear for many days. I speak today for the preservation of the Union. ‘Hear me for my cause.’ I speak today out of a solicitous and anxious heart, for the restoration to the country of that quiet and that harmony which make the blessings of this Union so rich, and so dear to us all.”

On another and more glorious occasion Webster, referring to his own eyes, had also said:

"Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the Republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original lustre, not a stripe erased or polluted, not a single star obscured, bearing for its motto, no such miserable interrogatory as 'What is all this worth?' nor those other words of delusion and folly, 'Liberty first and Union Afterward'; but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over the sea and over the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart—Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable!"

Lincoln took this sentiment for his own throughout the war.

The men of the Revolution and the Constitutional Convention had long since departed. The great men of their succeeding generation were dead; Marshall, whose legal mind had made the constitution a cohesive agreement which melted and held the states in one Union, had been dead a score of years. Calhoun, of South Carolina, leader in its great fight for nullification of the Tariff Act of 1828 and the heresy of states rights, had died in 1850; Clay, for forty years a favorite in national politics, who said:

"I owe a paramount allegiance to the whole nation and a subordinate one to my own state,"

and, who through the Missouri Compromise and other peace treaties, sought to do the impossible task of homing slavery in a free land, had died in 1852; Webster, whose powerful logic had often guided Marshall in his decision on the constitution, whose eloquence had filled the Senate, whose patriotism had fired the nation, whose wisdom had guided the ship of state, was no more. His great heart had broken when, thinking to save the nation, he had joined Clay in the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and had lost the confidence of his long-time friends, who had branded him as "Ichabod." The giants were dead. The Missouri Compromise was repealed, and abolition, like Banquo's ghost at the banquet, would not down. Slavery, like a giant specter, stalked the night. The fugitive slave bill was passed. The Kansas-Nebraska Act became a law. Proslavery men flooded across the Kansas border to make it a slave state. Old John Brown, with his lawless gang, fought his war on the Pottowatomie and Marais de Cygne, only soon to meet his tragic end at Harper's Ferry. The nation seemed drifting into chaos. Some were for slavery first, some for freedom first—some would destroy the Union to save slavery, others would lose the Union to destroy slavery. The great Whig party had dissolved into contending factions, bitterly op-

posed to each other, while the united South was pressing for more territory and greater power. It was at this hour there emerged from the prairies of Illinois, this unknown country lawyer, this phrase-maker, whose voice became the rallying call of the whole North,

“A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this Government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved; I do not expect the house to fall; but I do expect that it will cease to be divided.”

To us now it seems unbelievable that having chosen Lincoln as their president, there should not have been a united North backing him in the fierce fight to save the Union, but that was far from the truth: He carried the burden almost alone and was hindered, impeded, opposed and villified by those who should have been his friends and assistants. When he came to power, he found a government which had been betrayed by weakness and conspiracy so that its forts, its munitions of war, and many of its best generals and officers were already under the control of and in the service of the rebellion. He found the South already passing resolutions of secession, openly defiant, vindictive and aggressive. He found the North hysterical, divided in sentiment, and wavering in purpose. Those who had been blatant for abolition were now ready for peace at any price, and willing to accede to any terms.

Horace Greeley, the editor of the greatest paper in America, was saying in his columns that the South could not be coerced. William H. Seward, former governor of New York, acknowledged leader of the Senate and already pledged to the cabinet, was willing to support the Crittenden Compromise. Wendell Phillips, and Charles Sumner, leaders of the abolition movement, were willing to let the South go in peace if only it carried slavery with it.

No one seemed to be thinking straight until Lincoln in his inaugural address said:

“In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The Government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the Government, while I shall have the most solemn one to ‘preserve, protect, and defend it’.”

“I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriotic grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.”



Notwithstanding this clear cut statement, even his cabinet did not seem to understand the issue. Seward, Chase and Cameron were defeated candidates for the presidency. Each envious and suspicious of the other thought himself greater than his master. A month after the inaugural, Seward presented to Lincoln "Some Thoughts for the President's Consideration," in which he said that a month had passed and the government had no settled policy. He then laid out an elaborate program, including a predatory war against foreign powers, which he thought would reunite the Country and offered himself to carry the program into effect, if the president should desire. The impertinence would have angered a lesser man, but Lincoln merely called his attention to the statement in his message, and said that he would himself assume the responsibility of carrying out the policy which he had then announced, with the approval of Mr. Seward himself.

Some of his own cabinet opposed the relief of Sumpter. When the Confederates finally fired upon Sumpter, the North seemed to recover temporarily from its panic and rallied to the call of arms. A new dilemma presented itself because the abolition element demanded immediate liberation of the slaves. Lincoln believed such an act to be unconstitutional except as a war measure and that it would alienate the border states and drive them into the Confederacy. With clear vision he saw the contest to be greater than freedom or slavery, because freedom would be useless if the Union were lost.

In his special message to Congress, called July 4th, 1861, he said:

"And this issue embraces more than the fate of these United States. It presents to the whole family of man the question whether a constitutional republic, or democracy—a government of the people by the same people—can or can not maintain its territorial integrity against its own domestic foes. It presents the question whether discontented individuals, too few in numbers to control administration according to organic law in any case, can always, upon the pretenses made in this case, or on any other pretenses, or arbitrarily without any pretense, break up their government, and thus practically put an end to free government upon the earth. It forces us to ask, Is there in all republics this inherent and fatal weakness? Must a government of necessity be too *strong* for the liberties of its own people, or too *weak* to maintain its own existence?"

But the hot heads would not be still. General Fremont, in command in the West, issued an order freeing the slaves of all rebels in his department. Lincoln rescinded the order, and administered a rebuke to the old general. A coterie of senators and representatives in Congress, unwilling or unable to understand, joined in a cabal which lasted throughout the war, and endeavored to take

over the management of the army, and criticised and lampooned the president unmercifully. They were not small men, but were men of great political strength and power, including in their numbers, Zachariah Chandler, Thaddeus Stevens, Ben F. Wade, William Henry Winter, and at times Sumner and Trumbull. If these men had had their way, the great border states of the Middle West would have been forced into the Confederacy in the first year of the war and the issue would have been extremely doubtful. The war would have been a narrow one of abolition or slavery, and would not have been fought upon the particular question of whether or not a government of the people may be strong enough to maintain its own integrity. John Hay denominates these vindictive congressmen the Jacobin Club, and states that a number of the president's cabinet were in communion with them and seemed to sympathize with their purpose.

Not only was the president hampered by his own advisers and by the members of his own party in Congress, but he was unable to get action and co-operation from his generals in the field. Scott was superannuated and unable to handle the Army of the Potomac. McClellan, a brilliant graduate of West Point, with a post graduate observation of the great armies of Europe, and the Crimean War, and fresh from recent action in the West was called to Washington and given command. Raw troops by the thousands were put in his hands, and with great ability he whipped them into an army, but he lacked initiative and courage. He was always under-estimating the strength of his army and overestimating that of his antagonist. Congress, backed by the Northern sentiment, clamored for a battle. Lincoln gave him his marching orders but he temporized and insisted upon re-enforcements and could not be brought to meet the enemy. With wonderful loyalty, Lincoln supported him, responded to each new demand, and used every effort to encourage him to give battle without delay. Finally he laid down a specific program for McClellan to follow, which contemplated a drive straight for Richmond and included attacking the enemy at Manassas. This McClellan refused to do, only to find that the enemy anticipated the very advance which Lincoln had ordered and had evacuated Manassas, when, with monumental stupidity, McClellan marched his army to Manassas, and then marched it back again, making himself the laughing stock of friends and enemies alike. Then, contrary to Lincoln's desire, McClellan adopted the program of the Peninsular Campaign, which resulted in a miserable failure.

All the time the Jacobin Club was criticising and demanding the dismissal of McClellan. The Jacobins had forced Lincoln to dismiss Cameron from his cabinet, and Lincoln had put one of their own sympathizers, Edward M. Stanton, in his place. Stanton joined the demand for McClellan's resignation, which was finally given, and Pope, Hallack, Hooker, Burnside and Meade, one general after another, was tried out, without success. The Army of

the Potomac, splendid on parade and a wonderful fighting machine, lacking only a general in command, suffered one humiliating defeat after another, until the North, weary and discouraged began again to clamor for peace.

Greeley, always critical, of uncertain temper and decision, frequently hysterical, but through the columns of the Tribune exerting an influence far beyond his deserts, was one of the President's most bitter critics. He claimed that the president was stubborn and unwilling to receive overtures of peace from the Confederates. In support of his contention, he claimed that the Confederacy had sent messengers, by way of Canada, to negotiate peace and called upon the president to admit them to his presence. Lincoln, who was always willing to negotiate peace on the basis of the Union, promptly called Mr. Greeley's hand, and appointed him as his agent to proceed to Canada to discover if there was or was not anything in the report, directing him, however, to treat only with accredited agents of President Davis, and then on the understanding that the purpose of negotiation was the full restoration of the Union and not a recognition of the Southern states as an independent nation. Greeley unwillingly accepted the mission. He found the delegates had no credentials and would not treat on the conditions imposed by Lincoln. He was humiliated and defeated but was not manly enough to acknowledge that he had been made the dupe of the shrewd politicians of the Confederacy.

Lincoln, throughout, was always loyal to his generals to the last degree. McClellan, was was a brilliant soldier, was inclined to feel that even the president was beneath serious consideration. He would frequently disregard the president's directions and expected the president to come to his house to see him instead of going to the White House to see the president. On night Lincoln took John Hay and went to McClellan's house for a conference. The general was attending the wedding of an army officer, and did not return until late at night. Lincoln and Hay waited for his return. Finally McClellan came in, and, although he was evidently notified that Lincoln was there, went directly up stairs. After waiting a considerable time, the president sent word to McClellan that he would like to see him. The messenger returned saying that the general had retired. Lincoln and Hay then departed. Hay was furious, but Lincoln passed the matter off as not important, with a rather casual remark, without the censure which the general deserved. Lincoln, either at that time or at some other time, remarked that he would be willing to hold McClellan's horse or even black his shoes if thereby he could bring about a victory for the Union Army. It may be noted, however, that after this incident, the conferences were held at the White House and not at McClellan's house.

There was always a good deal of rivalry between the friends of Chase and Seward. Chase belonged to the coterie which made up



the Jacobins. The Jacobins were very bitter against Seward and determined to force his resignation from the cabinet. They sent a committee for that purpose to the president. Lincoln listened to them and told them to come back the next day. Chase evidently knew of the movement. The next day the committee returned and found themselves in a cabinet meeting with every member present except Seward. Lincoln asked them to repeat their demand, which they did, anticipating that Chase would join with them. Chase, however, was put in a very embarrassing position. He could not take an open stand against a fellow member of the cabinet, and at the same time did not wish to appear to desert the members of his own clique. The meeting was not satisfactory. The next morning Chase called upon the president, and said that he had been put in a false position, and that under the circumstances thought he should resign, and with some hesitation pulled a resignation from his pocket. Before he could return it Lincoln reached for it and said that he was very glad to have it and would take it under consideration. In the meantime, Seward had tendered his resignation. Thereupon, Lincoln took both resignations and returned each of them with the statement that he could not spare either one and insisted upon both remaining in the cabinet. By this clever maneuver, the opponents of Seward were thwarted because if Seward's resignation were accepted, Chase's would be also.

There is a multitude of Lincoln stories supposed to have been told by him or about him. A few of them, well authenticated, will illustrate his sagacity in handling men, his patience, his humility and utter lack of envy or selfishness.

Stanton was a very competent but ill-natured man, utterly devoid of any sense of humor. He would frequently disregard the orders of the president, putting his opinion above that of his chief. One day, a man made application to Lincoln for a more or less trivial matter. Lincoln gave him a note to Stanton directing Stanton to grant the application. Very soon the man came back and said Stanton refused to carry out the order, and said that Lincoln was a fool. Lincoln said, "Did Mr. Stanton say I was a fool?" The man said "Yes, he used those very words." Lincoln said, "Well, Mr. Stanton, usually knows what he is talking about and always means what he says, so if he said I was a fool, I guess he is right."

On another occasion, however, when Stanton refused to carry out the order of the president, Lincoln simply looked at him and said, "Mr. Secretary, you will have to do it," and he did. Stanton was always impatient at Lincoln for his story telling, and especially for a habit which he had of opening the cabinet meetings with reading a few passages from Artemus Ward's book. Lincoln was fond of Artemus Ward. One night, long after midnight, when his two secretaries, Hay and Nicolay, were working in the White House, Lincoln came out in his night gown, with Artemus Ward's book in his hand, and sitting on the edge of the

table read from the book to the young men for a long time, apparently oblivious to the fact that he presented a ludicrous appearance, but enjoying the fun of the book immensely.

There was a strain of mysticism in his nature, which seemed to be reflected in his dreams. There was a certain dream which he had many times and which seemed to presage the results of an approaching battle. A few nights before his assassination, he had a remarkable dream which he related to his family. He dreamed that he awoke in the night and found the White House unusually quiet, although he could hear a distinct sobbing. He arose and found all of the rooms deserted until he came to the great East Room, which he found lighted and the body of the president lying on a catafalque, with mourners in the room. The president had been assassinated. From the time of his election, he seemed to have a vision of the great task which was before him and that after the accomplishment of that task, he would meet with the death which in fact awaited him.

When he was a candidate for Congress, his opponent was a preacher named Peter Cartwright. Cartwright was a revivalist and used the popular methods of the day. On one occasion, Lincoln dropped into a meeting held by Cartwright. In the course of the meeting, he asked all of those who wished to go to Heaven to stand. Many of the audience arose. He then asked all those who did not wish to go to hell to arise. The rest of the audience arose, except Lincoln. Cartwright seized the opportunity and said: "I notice Mr. Lincoln in the audience and he is the only one who remains seated. Might I ask Mr. Lincoln where he expects to go?" Lincoln arose and said that he had dropped into the meeting for a religious service and was not expecting to be interrogated as to personal matters, but since the question had been asked, he would answer frankly that he expected to go to Congress—and he did.

When McClellan was training the army of the Potomac about Washington, he spent a good deal of time in dress parade and postponed action with the enemy after Lincoln had directed him many times to proceed. Lincoln finally suggested to McClellan one day that if he did not wish to use the army he would like to borrow it for a few days.

The war dragged along with more defeats for the North than victories until the fall of '62. There had been a constant running fight and criticism of the president by the press, by the Jacobin Club and by the newspapers of England and France. There were jealousies and bickerings in the cabinet. Stanton was capable but surly, insulting and insubordinate to his chief. McClellan, openly, insulted and ignored the president. The North was still demanding the emancipation of the slaves. The Jacobins were demanding that Seward be dismissed and someone of their number put in his place as secretary of state. England was demanding satisfaction for the Trent affair. Napoleon was attempting to get a foothold in America. The laboring men of England were hostile be-



cause they were deprived of the Southern trade. New York business and industries were talking of secession for the same reason. Lincoln made a last call on Congress and the border states to accept emancipation on condition that the government appropriate four hundred million dollars to reimburse the slave holders for freedom of their slaves. The cabinet was not willing, Congress refused to pass the law, and the border states refused co-operation. Lincoln called his cabinet together and read to them the Emancipation Proclamation, telling them that he did not wish advice as to whether or not he should issue the Proclamation because he had himself decided that, but would be glad of suggestions as to phraseology. From that hour he had cut loose from his advisers as well as his critics and became sole master of the situation. At Seward's suggestion, he withheld the Proclamation until the North had a victory, so that the Proclamation might not seem a last desperate expedient, but rather an act of confident aggression. The Battle of Antietam furnished the opportunity and the Proclamation was issued.

The turning point of the war finally came on the 4th of July, 1863, when Vicksburg fell and the Battle of Gettysburg was fought and won. The war might have ended then had Meade not let the army of Lee slip through his fingers and get away. At last Lincoln found the man, called Grant from Vicksburg to the Potomac and sent Sherman to Atlanta and the sea. It was not all over. Some terrible defeats were still suffered, but slowly and surely the splendid army which McClellan had developed was used to close in upon the gallant Confederate forces until ultimate defeat was certain.

As we look at it now, it would seem that in the spring of '64, anyone must know that the end was near, but the Democratic Convention which nominated McClellan, resolved:

"That this convention does explicitly declare, as the sense of the American people, after four years of failure to restore the Union by the experiment of war, during which, under the pretense of a military necessity, or war power higher than the Constitution, the Constitution itself has been disregarded in every part, and the public liberty and the private right alike trodden down and the material prosperity of the country essentially impaired, justice, humanity, liberty and the public welfare demand that immediate efforts be made for a cessation of hostilities, with a view to an ultimate convention of the States, or other peaceably means to the end that at the earliest practicable moment peace may be restored on the basis of the Federal Union of the States."

Chase, still a member of Lincoln's cabinet, and a consort of the Jacobins, believed that he could be nominated in opposition to his chief and plotted to that end. But the common people whom Lincoln loved knew him better and valued him higher than did

the politicians. When the convention came he was overwhelmingly nominated.

Even after this demonstration of his popularity with the people of the North, a conspiracy was formed in August to force him to resign from the nomination on the ground that he could not possibly be elected. Greeley and the Jacobins made such noise that Lincoln himself believed for a time that he would be beaten at the polls but he refused to resign. Again the people showed their unflinching trust in him and the conspiracy failed.

The confederacy was slowly but surely approaching its doom. In desperation Jefferson Davis again sent messengers to sue for peace—or rather for an armistice—this time with credentials. Lincoln and Seward met them at Hampton Roads. Lincoln offered an honorable peace, conditional always upon a reunited country. The delegates equivocated and asked for an armistice. It is said that Lincoln took a clean sheet of paper and said to Alexander H. Stephens (one of the delegates)—“Stephens, let me write ‘Union’ at the top of this sheet and you may write what you will below.”

The conference came to nothing, and the battle went on. Richmond fell—Lee surrendered at Appomatox and the war was virtually over.

Lincoln was inexorable in contention for principle but gentle and yielding as a woman in his attitude toward persons who differed with him. Catch his spirit in the second inaugural address:

“Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman’s two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said ‘the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.’

“With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation’s wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.”

His personal triumph was complete. His loved country was saved. He walked through the streets of Richmond.

On April 14, 1865, the stars and stripes were raised again over the walls of Sumpter. Henry Ward Beecher delivered the address. The president was in Washington riding in the parks with Mrs. Lincoln. It was the happiest day of a life more burdened with sorrow than any since the Christ. It was the fatal day. Beecher said:

“Never did two such orbs of experience meet in one hemisphere, as the joy and the sorrow of the same week in this land. The joy was as sudden as if no man had expected it, and as entrancing as if it had fallen a sphere from heaven. It rose up over sobriety, and swept business from its moorings, and ran down through the land in irresistible course. Men embraced each other in brotherhood that were strangers in the flesh. They sang, or prayed, or, deeper yet, many could only think thanksgiving and weep gladness. That peace was sure; that government was firmer than ever; that the land was cleansed of plague; that the ages were opening to our footsteps, and we were to begin a march of blessings; that blood was staunched, and scowling enmities were sinking like storms beneath the horizon; that the dear fatherland, nothing lost, much gained, was to raise up in unexampled honor among the nations of the earth—these thoughts, and that undistinguishable throng of fancies, the hopes, and desires, and yearnings, that filled the soul with tremblings like the heated air of midsummer days—all these kindled up such a surge of joy as no words may describe.

“In one hour joy lay without a pulse, without a gleam, or breath. A sorrow came that swept through the land as huge storms sweep through the forest and field, rolling thunder along the sky, disheveling the flowers, daunting every singer in thicket or forest, and pouring blackness and darkness across the land and up the mountains. Did ever so many hearts, in so brief a time, touch two such boundless feelings? It was the uttermost of joy; it was the uttermost of sorrow—noon and midnight, without a space between.”

The story of his foul assassination is familiar to every school child. He fell in defense of that government which he loved so well, as truthfully a victim of the rebellion as any soldier on the battlefield. Sad and tragic as it was, I would not have had him die at any other time or in any other way. It was at the moment of assured victory and of supreme joy. His personal triumph had been complete. It was without pain or suffering, or sorrow or disappointment. He died as had so many of his own boys whom he loved so well.

Had he lived to attempt the reconstruction of the rebellious states, he would have fought an unequal battle with his enemies in Congress, who, after the war was over, would have assumed, and probably could have maintained, the right of the legislative over the executive, in imposing conditions of reconstruction.

He seemed to me like some faithful, great-hearted police dog defending a home and inmates whom he loved, while the house dogs were snarling and snapping at his heels; defending against some invader, and when he fell prostrate, the curs began to lick his wounds, and all the family, aroused at last, came running out and fell in tears over his dead body.

About twenty miles from Philadelphia, along the banks of a river, lies Valley Forge, where the Revolutionary troops spent the darkest winter of the Revolution. Batteries have been replaced along the valley; fac similies of the huts in which the soldiers lived and suffered have been built in different parts of the valley, and there, nestling in the forests hard by one of these shacks, at the personal solicitation of a rector of an Episcopal Church, has been erected a little cathedral, perfect in all its details; the transept, altar and choir, with one of the sweetest organs in America. Close by the altar there is a beautiful white marble figure of Washington, kneeling in prayer as he often kneeled in person, to renew that courage and faith which he needed to carry forward to consummation the task which he bore in his solitude. Through this shrine, there went many thousands of our boys who fought in the World War, there to listen to the music and to receive the benediction of the priest, and an inspiration for their mission, standing as they were on the holy ground of the Revolution.

On the banks of the Potomac, at a far end of the mall from the Capitol Dome, a loving people have erected a stately marble monument, the most beautiful in America, in the fashion of a Greek temple. The interior is one great spacious room, entirely empty except for the figure of Lincoln seated there alone, as he sat for four weary years in the White House alone, and with his unfaltering courage and infinite patience and unwavering faith in Divine Providence won the war, thus assuring, not to America alone, but to all humanity, that free government of the people, by the people and for the people should not perish forever from the earth.







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